



Aeschynomene villosa Poir. (Fabaceae): A New Record for India

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Abstract

Aeschynomene villosa Poir. (Fabaceae) is reported for the first time from India. It occurred in Savali taluka, Vadodara district, Gujarat. Detailed description and illustration of the species are provided, besides key to the Indian species of *Aeschynomene*.

Keywords: *Aeschynomene villosa*, Fabaceae, New record, Vadodara, India

Introduction

A specimen of the genus *Aeschynomene* L. belonging to Fabaceae was collected from the Savali taluka of Vadodara district in Gujarat. The specimen did not match with any of the species of the genus known so far from India. It was identified as *Aeschynomene villosa* Poir. (Rudd, 1991) and the identity was later confirmed at CAL.

A key to the species occurring in India, brief description and detailed illustrations are provided.

Key to species

- 1a. Leaflets 1-costate, elliptic, oblong, or obovate.....2
- 1b. Leaflets 2 to several costate, somewhat falcate.....3
- 2a. Stem pith like; flowers 15-20 mm long; vexillum and keel petals usually pubescent; fruits with articles about 10 mm long, 7-8 mm broad, joints of pod echinulate.....**A. aspera**
- 2b. Stem woody; flowers 7-10 mm long; petals glabrous; fruit with articles 5-6 mm long, 3-6 mm wide, joints of pod smooth.....**A. indica**
- 3a. Fruit glabrous to puberulent or glandular-hispidulous, definitely articulated, reticulate-veiny near the margin, usually muricate; flowers 6-8 mm long.....**A. americana**
- 3b. Fruit villous or hispid, articulations weak or lacking, the surface without conspicuous venation or murication; flowers 3-6 mm long.....**A. villosa**

Aeschynomene villosa Poir. in Lam., Encyc. Suppl. 4: 76. 1816; Rudd, Contr. U. S. Natl. Herb. 32: 32. 1955 & Reinwardtia 5: 27. 1959; Verdcourt, Man. New

Guinea Leg. 368. 1979. Type: Puerto Rico, savannas, Ledru s. n. (P, n.v.).

Fig. 1.

Erect herbs, upto about 1 m tall; stem hispid; stipules peltate-appendiculate, hispid, especially at the point of attachment, striate, ciliate, 5-10 mm long, 1-1.5 mm wide, the upper portion attenuate, slightly longer than the lower attenuate or erose portion. *Leaves* about 2-7 cm long, 20-50 foliolate, petiole and rachis glandular-hispidulous; leaflets 3-15 mm long, 1-3 mm wide, apiculate, base asymmetrically rounded, glabrous, subfalcate, 2 to several costate, ciliate; racemes axillary, 3-7 flowered, rachis hispidulous; bracts cordate, 1.5-6 mm long, 1-2 mm wide, ciliate, acuminate; bracteoles ovate-lanceolate, 1-4 mm long, 0.5-1 mm wide, ciliate, acute to acuminate. *Flowers* 3-7 mm long; calyx hispidulous, bilabiate, 3-5 mm long; petals purplish, glabrous; stamens 10, diadelphous, 5+5; anthers uniform, versatile; style glabrous, with a minute terminal stigma. *Fruits* 1-3 cm long, 3-9 seeded, stipe 1.5-2 mm long, articulations weak, articles suborbicular, 2-3 mm in diameter, glandular-villous, venation inconspicuous, margins often breaking away from the body of articles; seeds blackish, 2-2.5 mm long, 1.5-2 mm wide.

Flowering & Fruiting: October.

Habitat: *Aeschynomene villosa* was found growing in damp areas along Mahi river banks in association with *Cyperus rotundus* L. and *Ammania multiflora* Roxb.

Distribution: Tropical and subtropical America, introduced in Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Australia, New Guinea.

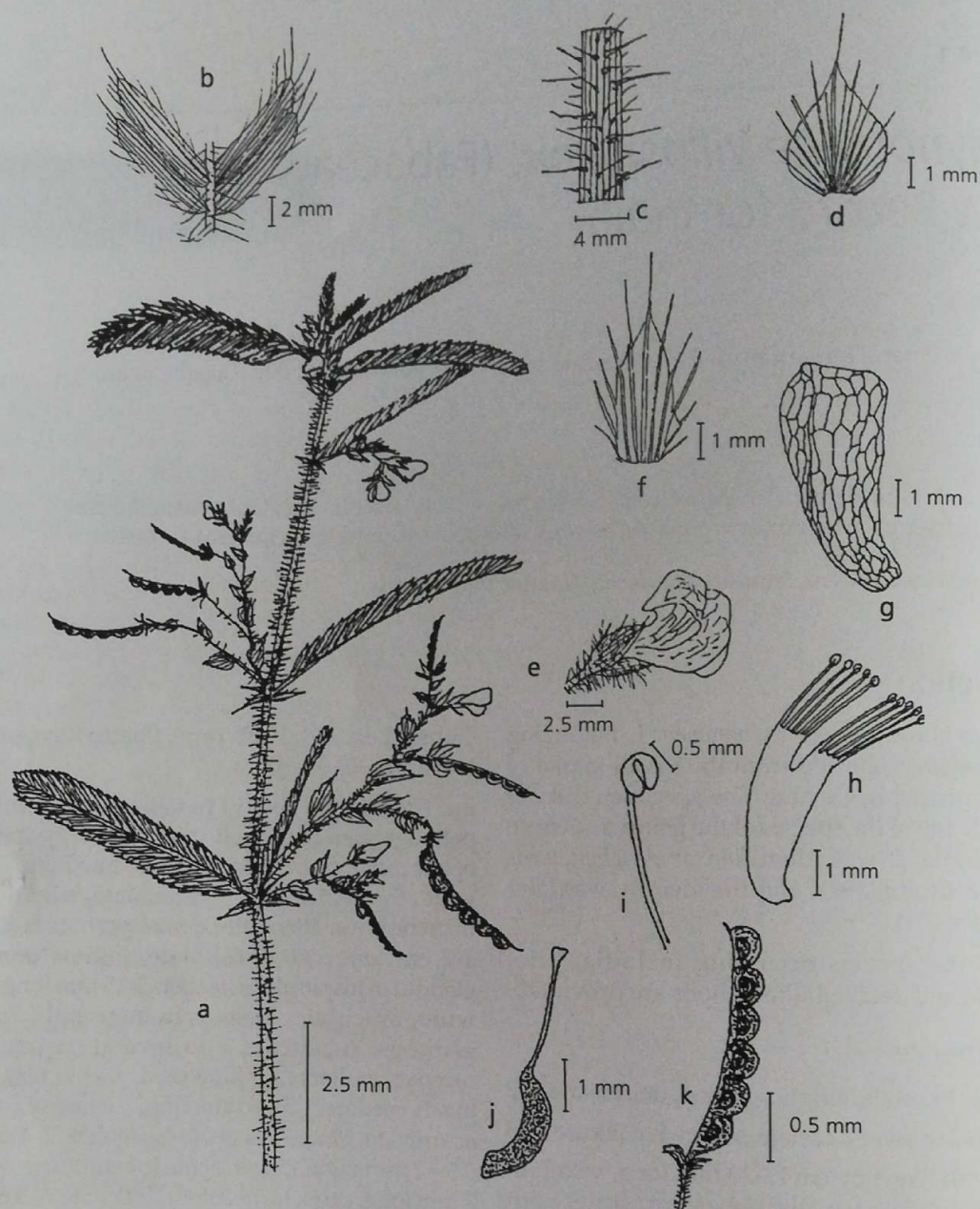


Figure 1. *Aeschynomene villosa* Poir. – a. Flowering twig; b. Leaflets; c. Stem portion; d. Bract; e. Flower; f. Sepal; g. Petal; h. Stamen (5+5); i. Anther; j. Pistil; k. Fruit.

Acknowledgements

I am obliged to Dr N.S.R. Krishnayya, my guiding teacher, for direction and support. I am grateful to Dr M. Sanjappa, Director, BSI, Kolkata, for authenticating the species as a new record for India. I am thankful to Prof. S. D. Sabnis, Ex-Head, Department of Botany, for the help rendered in identification of this species. I thank Dr Jitendra G. Gavali for illustrating the plant and the Head, Department of Botany, for providing facilities.

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Received 17.4.2003

Accepted 15.9.2004